

REMARKS

The specification and claims have been amended as needed so as to take care of formal matters.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested, however, for the suggestion of rewriting the claim to embody the format of 37 CFR §1.75(i). This format is appropriate for certain claims and not for others, the present claims included. See also claim 1 of the applied reference, namely, U.S. Patent 4,373,750 to MANTELLE et al. in which Rule 75(i) is likewise inappropriate for the claimed subject matter.

The claims have also been amended so as to sharpen their definition of the invention relative to MANTELLE et al.

Reconsideration is accordingly respectfully requested, for the rejection of the claims as anticipated by MANTELLE et al.

In MANTELLE et al., Fig. 8, seals are provided at 22, recessed within the inner periphery of the annular rib and spaced from the juncture of the two pipe ends.

By contrast, the present invention is provided with bevels 20 on the pipe ends, and these bevels together provide a space within which the seal 21 is disposed. The cylindrical inner surface of the rib 4 of the present invention can accordingly be recessed as in Fig. 8, or not as in Fig. 7.

This distinction is now clearly brought out in the claims.

This distinction is important because it is preferable to provide one seal rather than two. Thus, according to the present invention, the seal performs the unique dual function of sealing in all three directions away from the seal (upstream and downstream with respect to the rib and radially inwardly). By contrast, in MANTELLE et al., the seals 22 seal in upstream and downstream directions; but there is no radially acting seal.

Thus, MANTELLE et al. has doubled the work of providing seats for the seals, has doubled the number of seals, and has performed only part of the function of the present invention.

A new claim 21 is specific to the Fig. 7 embodiment, as distinct from the Fig. 8 embodiment, as to which latter embodiment claim 19 is specific.

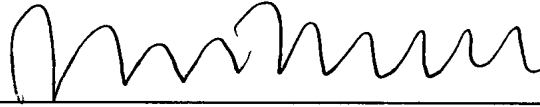
As the claims now in the case bring out the above distinctions with ample particularity, it is believed that they are all patentable, and reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any

overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional  
fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

YOUNG & THOMPSON

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Patch', written over a horizontal line.

Robert J. Patch, Reg. No. 17,355  
745 South 23<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Arlington, VA 22202  
Telephone (703) 521-2297  
Telefax (703) 685-0573  
(703) 979-4709

RJP/lk